

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, November 24, 1986

The House met at 11 a.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

PETITIONS

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Mr. Doug Lewis (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 106(8), I have the honour to table, in both official languages, the Government's response to petition Nos. 332-3, 332-4, 332-5, 332-6 and 332-8.

OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED CHANGES TO PATENT ACT

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present a petition signed by residents of Winnipeg and towns in Manitoba, including Birtle, Rosburn and La Rivière in which they say that the proposed measure, meaning the change in the patent drug law, will unfairly hurt those Canadians whose health needs require the purchase of prescription drugs on an ongoing basis. Therefore, they humbly pray and call upon Parliament to reject these proposals which will increase prescription drug prices for Canadians.

Mr. Speaker: Order. A few days ago I drew to the attention of Hon. Members that it is the practice for an Hon. Member who rises to present a petition that all petitions which that Hon. Member wishes to present at that time ought to be presented together. I know the Hon. Member who has just spoken co-operated with the Chair in that regard, but I would ask Hon. Members to keep that in mind.

REQUEST TO WITHDRAW TARIFF ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE BOOKS

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I have several petitions that request the Government to withdraw the unjust tariff on books—

[Translation]

—and humbly pray and call upon Parliament to rescind this tariff which may cause irreparable harm to the book publishing industry in Canada and jeopardize the federal Government's position on cultural industries in the free trade talks.

Mr. Speaker, these petitions were sent to us from every Canadian province, including my own riding.

[English]

OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED CHANGES TO PATENT ACT

Mr. Derek Blackburn (Brant): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition signed by several Canadians who are outraged at the Government's intent to tinker with the Patent Act which will result in higher drug costs. The operative paragraph is brief. It says:

Wherefore, the undersigned, your Petitioners humbly pray and call upon Parliament to reject these proposals which will increase prescription drug prices for Canadians.

[Translation]

REQUEST TO WITHDRAW TARIFF ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE BOOKS

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, this petition has been certified correct as to form and content, in accordance with Standing Order 106. The petition asks—

[English]

—to the honourable House of Commons and Parliament:

WHEREAS the Government of Canada has imposed a retaliatory tariff on imported books in the English language which has limited the access of Canadians to literature and information, and;

WHEREAS the tariff has little negative effect on the publishing industry of the United States, yet penalizes Canada's consumers, book publishers, book sellers, distributors and Canada's culture, and;

WHEREAS rising book prices have placed a strain on the book acquisition programs and policies of our nation's public and specialized libraries.

WHEREAS the undersigned, your Petitioners, humbly pray and call upon Parliament to: rescind this tariff which threatens irreparable harm to the Canadian book industry and compromises federal policy on cultural industries in respect to free trade negotiations.

That is one petition I have, Mr. Speaker, from the Province of Ontario. I have other petitions.

The second petition is signed by several residents from the City of Windsor. In light of the fact that rising book prices have placed a strain on book acquisition programs and the policies of our nation's public and specialized libraries, the petitioners are calling upon Parliament to rescind this tariff which threatens irreparable harm to the Canadian book industry.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, I have another petition addressed to the Canadian Government. This petition was signed by a great many people from Toronto, who are asking the Government to rescind the present duty on books, since the duty is only having an impact on small Canadian businesses and has no impact at all on the Americans, and because libraries and the education